

COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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Two historical facts.—During the existence of the late ministry, Mr. Fox being then secretary of state for foreign affairs, the son of the then Lord Chancellor, Erskine, was appointed minister plenipotentiary to the American States, that young gentleman being then called to the bar in England. About the same time, the Lord Chancellor Erskine gave to a son of Mrs. Bouverie a living, in the church of England, generally estimated to be worth twelve hundred pounds a year.

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SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS (continued from page 171).—I. *Vote of Thanks.*

II. *American States.* III. *Danish Expedition.*—On Thursday, the 28th of January, a motion was made, in both Houses, to give the thanks of parliament to the fleet and army employed in the Copenhagen expedition. At the time, when the titles and marks of honour were bestowed, upon Admiral Gambier and others, I expressed my opinion, that the measure was wrong; because, though the success of the enterprise was of great national importance, to insure that success required neither courage nor skill, except, perhaps, in a few persons of inferior rank; because, from the very statement of the advocates of the ministers, it appeared, that the means provided were such, as, when compared with the object to be accomplished, rendered failure morally impossible, because it would have been a crime to fail, and that, therefore, to succeed was little more than a negative merit; because, in short, to bestow honours upon the commanders of such an expedition, was to proclaim to the world, that it was, in English commanders, a great merit, a highly distinguishing characteristic, not to be drivellers, or traitors, since no men of common understanding could have failed, unless from a want of fidelity. These arguments, and some others, which were made use of in the Register, and in other public prints, at the time referred to, have now been repeated in parliament; against these arguments nothing of any weight has been urged; and it does, to me at least, clearly appear, that the vote of thanks, as well as the other honours, have, in this instance, been prostituted to party purposes, that is to say, to the purpose of giving to the whole measure an eclat which did not deserve, with a view of enhancing, in the minds of the people, the merit of the present ministers. But, while the spirit of party appears to have dictated the motion for a vote of thanks, there has appeared, in the opposition to it, a spirit of exactly

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the same character. Messrs. Windham and Tierney (the latter of whom had almost sworn, that he never would belong to any ministry or party with the former) seemed to have, for their grand object, the indulgence of their spleen against Sir Home Popham, who, it must be confessed, has been a zealous and formidable opponent to them in politics, but who, upon that very account, should, on this occasion, have escaped particular notice. Mr. Windham bestows many compliments upon Lords Cathcart and Gambier; with respect to them, he takes care to rub off with one hand what he lays on with the other; he brings forward the excellence of the private character of the one, and the past services (though he does not particularize them) of the other; but, of Sir Home Popham he recollects nothing but the demerits. He takes, or rather, he finds out, occasion to observe, that “one ostensible part of the expedition had been entrusted to an officer, who could only plead, in his behalf, the approbation of a self-created tribunal, in opposition to a sentence of condemnation, which had lately been passed upon him by one legally constituted, and who, in his fortune, had exemplified the old adage, “that when the King loses, the Knave wins;” an adage, which must be very old indeed, for, I scarcely think that any man now living ever heard of it before. It was travelling quite out of the natural course to notice, in this particular manner, Sir Home Popham and his court martial, especially as no particular mention had been made of his services, upon this occasion, by the ministers, and as he had received no sort of reward, though it was pretty generally understood, that of the merit of the execution of the measure, no small share did belong to him. Certainly, the approbation of the Lloyd’s men did him no honour; or, if he were, as he appeared to be, so very proud of the swords and the thanks, which they had to bestow, one might, with little regret, see him left to them as his sole possession in this way;

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but, it is, I think, as certain, the "legally constituted tribunal," of which Mr. Windham speaks, was a thing, which he and his late colleagues might as well have kept out of sight; for, though the letter of the law might not be violated in the constituting of that tribunal, no great pains were taken to adhere to its spirit. I am one of those, who censured, in all its parts, the expedition to Buenos Ayres. I looked upon it, and I still look upon it, as a mere money-making adventure; but, it does appear, from the evidence given at the court-martial, that Sir Home Popham was, by the minister, invested with somewhat of discretionary powers, and the public will not fail to recollect, that no court-martial was talked of, until the intelligence arrived, that the place had been re-captured by the Spaniards. Whatever might be the demerits of Sir Home Popham, however, his court-martial should have been constituted in the usual way, and in that way the proceedings against him ought to have been conducted. The law, relative to the constituting of courts-martial, makes provision, that the members, if there be a sufficient number, shall consist of persons stationed at the place where the court is held; and, it authorizes the taking in of two or three commanders, if there should not be captains enough present, rather than bring members from another station. Was this law, so well calculated to insure impartiality, by preventing *selection* on the part of the prosecutor, observed on the occasion referred to? In the *letter* perhaps it was; for several of the admirals, members of the court, did *hoist their flags* at Portsmouth, during the trial, and a little before the trial; but they struck those flags immediately afterwards, returning from whence they came; and, though they might be said to be stationed at Portsmouth, I shall leave the proceeding to be boasted of by those who were then ministers. There was, it appears from the proceedings of the court, a "learned" counsellor, Mr. Jarvis, sent down by the Admiralty to plead against the prisoner, a thing totally unprecedented in the naval history of England. If, in sending down a counsellor to plead, and in making the court consist of admirals, the object was to give dignity and solemnity to the proceeding, how came it to pass, that neither of these precautions was taken in the case of Captain Whitby, who was tried, at the same port, upon a charge grounded upon a complaint of the American government, that he had violated the law of nations, that he had been guilty of an act of aggression against them in their own waters, and that

he had wounded many, and murdered one, of their seamen? This trial, in which the good-understanding and, perhaps, the peace, of two nations were involved, did, surely require as much dignity and solemnity as it was possible to give it; yet, Captain Whitby was tried in the usual way; no admirals assumed temporary command upon the occasion, and no counsellor was sent down by the admiralty to plead against him. These are facts, which nobody will attempt to deny; and, with these facts before them, I shall leave my readers to judge, whether it would not have been full as well, if Mr. Windham had suffered the recollection of Sir Home Popham's court-martial, to remain as a source of secret consolation to those by whom that court-martial was ordered and organized. Mr. Tierney is reported to have said: "Why should not the house attend to the dignified example set them by another distinguished assembly—Lloyd's Coffee-house Men?—Those gentlemen knew the true value of their approbation, and were resolved not to be lavish of it; for they had not yet honoured this extraordinary service with their notice, notwithstanding their great favourite (Sir Home Popham) was captain of the fleet. He believed for his part that those gentlemen had been disappointed: it was well known that they had not received the slightest notice of the signature of the capitulation in sufficient time to apprize them of the period at which the Danes begun to be at open war with us. Would ministers affect to be ignorant of the sentiments of merchants in the Russian trade upon that head? Had they not actually been furnished with a list, setting forth the number of vessels captured? This must have been a sore disappointment to the trading speculations of the gentlemen at Lloyd's; they who had so relied on their favourite, the gallant officer, who while smarting under the sentence of a court martial, was entrusted with a command of great trust, and put above the heads of his seniors, men of approved service and unimpeached character. But notwithstanding the opportunity afforded their favourite, and though he was in such habits of intimacy with the mayor of Birmingham, the alderman of this place and of that, he (Mr. T.) did fear that this officer had failed in satisfying the expectations of his friends at Lloyd's." Mr. Tierney seems to envy Sir Home Popham the honour of possessing these friends at Lloyd's. But, since when is it, that the late ministers have begun to

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talk (in public) thus contemptuously about the Lloyd's men? They said not a word of this sort while they were in office. They did, indeed, before they were in office, form a resolution, I believe, to make the Lloyd's fund a question in parliament; but, having obtained their offices, they appear to have thought it wise not to offend the city and its connections. For this, amongst the million other acts of meanness that they were guilty of, I was glad to see them overthrown. But, what had the Lloyd's men and their vases and swords and heir-looms to do with the Danish expedition? And what had the former conduct of Sir Home Popham to do with the question before the House? Why this, that Sir Home Popham was a favourite with the merchants; that the merchants had suffered by the Danish expedition; and that Sir Home Popham was known to have had a considerable share in the execution of that expedition. No: this was not the cause of his being dragged forward; the true cause was, that the late ministry had, in various ways, felt the effects of his talents, as a politician; that is to say, as a contestor of boroughs, and an exposé of their errors and faults; and, it was well worthy of remark, that not one of the ministers opened his lips in defence of Sir Home Popham, who, in consequence of being a person interested in the discussion, was absent from his place in the House. There has, I dare say, been some little envy excited in the naval service, by the preference, which was, upon this occasion, given to Sir Home Popham. It was to humour this, that the attack upon him was made; and, therefore, it was the duty of the ministers to repel that attack. But, these ministers are, I will engage, of the true breed; and, if so, they will never hesitate to sacrifice any one to their own convenience, however they may have profited from his exertions; and, moreover, it is precisely in proportion to those exertions that they are disposed to sacrifice him, because they well know, that, in that same proportion, it is improbable that he should go over to their opponents. Thus, they first receive the benefit of a man's talents and zeal, and, when they perceive, that he has, in supporting them, incurred the implacable enmity of their opponents, they, without the least hesitation, and, as if it were a matter of course, give him up to be tormented by those opponents, making to themselves the merit of having, by implication, disowned him; a refinement in baseness, which, it is to be hoped, none but courtiers have yet discovered, and the effects of which Sir Home Popham, fol-

lowing the fate of Sir Harry Mildmay, is in a fair way of feeling to their heart's content. With so much experience of this sort before him, it is, to me, a surprising thing, that any one of "the representatives of the people;" any one of those worthy gentlemen, who, from motives so disinterested, take upon them the labour of law-giving, should ever become what is called a partizan of any set of placemen, or, at least, that he should ever discover any thing like zeal, like sincerity, in their cause. It is surprising, that all men do not imitate the Saints; that is to say, give a measured support; always keep safely "upon their haunches," as some one said of Pitt; and, upon no occasion, suffer themselves to be urged into full speed. If actual recompence be the object, the example of Swift's Bedlamite is the thing: "Give me a penny, and I'll sing you a song; but give me the penny first." To return, now, to the debate: it ended in a division of 19 against the vote of thanks and 100 for it, Sir Francis Burdett having insisted upon dividing the honourable house, sorely against the will of the *outs*, who, as fast as they finished their speeches, marched away, Mr. Tierney having expressly stated, that it was not intended to have a division, seeming not to perceive, that any member might call for it, or, in a moment of forgetfulness, looking upon all those, who sat on the same side with himself, as being the subalterns and privates of a well-drilled party; a state of things which Mr. Tierney will never see again as long as he lives. When the thanks came to be communicated, on Monday, the first of February, it was curious enough to observe, that, though Sir Arthur Wellesley was the last upon the list of the generals present, more than one half of the Speaker's speech was addressed to him, exclusively, upon the score of his services in India, of which services not a word had been said in the vote of the House, and of which services many of those who joined in the vote, might possibly, think differently from the Speaker. Sir Home Popham, in his answer to the Speaker, is reported to have said, by way of conclusion: "that his life should be devoted to the service of his *beloved* sovereign and his *esteemed* country." I do not wish to play the critic; but, there is something so marked here, that, if the report be correct, I must say, that I think Sir Home's a very bad taste. Plain "king and country" would have been best; but, at any rate, no distinction should have been made between them. There is, besides, no reason in the distinction made by Sir Home. The love that he feels

for the king can be of no other sort than that which a man feels for his country. The idea of any personal affection, in this case, is ridiculous. The feeling is that of love for the king, as king; for the kingly office, in fact, and for that only because it is looked upon as being the repository of the honour and guardianship of the country. To use, therefore, an epithet of ardent affection to the former, and one of sober, after-marriage regard to the latter, was, to say the least of it, to shew no great degree of judgment, and might, if coming from a person less enthusiastic, give rise to suspicions, that the motive was not altogether disinterested —

II. On Tuesday, the 2d. instant, Mr. Eden (Lord Auckland's eldest son, and the new Teller of the Exchequer, I presume) made a motion for laying before the house a copy of Mr. Jefferson's message to the senate of the American States, relating to the non-ratification of the treaty, made with us, during the late administration. The professed motive of this motion was to shew, that the president had not the power of rejecting the treaty, without the consent of the senate; that that consent had not been obtained, and that, in fact, it might yet be ratified, though the king had said, in his speech, that the ratification had been refused. Mr. Eden appears to be deeply read in the little pamphlet, called "the Constitution of the United States of America;" but, if I recollect rightly, that pamphlet, which is, however, a very flexible piece of stuff, says not a word about non-ratification of treaties. The president is to make treaties, and when he is satisfied with them himself, he is to lay them before the senate for their approbation, or disapprobation; but, if he be not himself satisfied with what his negotiators have done, he wants no vote of the senate to authorize him to send a treaty back again; or, if it so please him, to put an end to the negotiation; so that, he has the power, at all times, to refuse to ratify a treaty, and, in the case before us, that refusal was given. The collateral matter of Mr. Eden's speech was, however, of the most importance. He expressed his hope, that the treaty might yet be ratified. It may, if the president should be induced to change his opinion of us; but, if he does change that opinion, it certainly will not be owing to the expression, on our part, of any such hopes, and particularly if we express them in parliament. Such hopes, if they are very dear to Mr. Eden's heart, are, I am convinced, much more likely to be realized from the effect of the king's proclamation relating to English sea-

men and others becoming citizens of America, his orders in council relating to commerce, and his orders for the sending out of ships, troops, and powder and ball to America. Speculations are afloat as to what the Americans will next do; for to remain as they are is a moral impossibility. They have, for a long time, been complaining of our laws of blockade; and, as the end of all their ridiculous threats, all their swaggering denunciations, they blockade themselves, and that, too, in their own ports. Some think, that their next measure will be, when they have got in all their ships, to invade Canada. This they can do, but not without men and arms and cannon and ammunition; and these cost money. They would easily penetrate into the country; but the country without Quebec is nothing, and they know from disgraceful experience, what it is to attack Quebec. They will, besides, have upper Canada first to subdue; and in that country, they will have to defeat a good number of Scotchmen, who are not apt to lay down their arms till they have made their assailants feel the effects of them. They must defeat these Scotchmen, or they will have them in their rear, together with a company or two of artillery. So that, even an inroad into Canada, though it may be, by a vast superiority of numbers, effected, will be, by no means, a holiday enterprize, nor an enterprize of little expense. And, whence is the money to come? I have before stated, that there are, in the American States, no internal taxes, and have shewn, that, in case of war with us, it will be impossible to collect an internal tax; that the whole of the revenue arises from custom-house duties; that four-fifths of these arise from commerce with us; that the whole annual revenue is about 15,000,000 of dollars; that more than one half of this is required to meet the annual expenses of the national debt; and, that, of course, a war with us, while it will add ten fold to the expenses, will almost totally destroy the revenue, leaving the national debt to pay its own interest and the government to maintain itself. What, then, if they resolve upon war, is to be done? Why, it appears to me, that the first step must be an act of confiscation of all debts, private as well as public, due to England, and of all property owned by Englishmen. The amount of these debts and of this property may be about 12,000,000 of pounds sterling. But, an act of confiscation would not bring more than a third or fourth part of that sum into the treasury. What it would bring in would, however, enable the government to go on for

a while; must soon at once, thought, of America from its her revolution notes have will not t notes, es grees. I me to rel created i ing; that doubled i on incre as long will not coming i short, tha the notor make tha ges, not f tion of which an kept as "King ed, that, money, a one wou an even people a that, if a England, a regular money, a loans, will lend al reve ment, th that it ha totally u depreciat France a during t now? is, unde During commerc though-t cause; y would r powerful hope an own, in powerful so powe are to f deets, th matters, with the

a while; but, a creation of paper-money must soon follow; and, then the country is, at once, in a state of revolution. It is thought, by some persons, that the situation of America differs materially, in this respect, from its situation at the commencement of her revolutionary war; that, banks and bank-notes having become so general, the people will not be alarmed at a new creation of such notes, especially as it will take place by degrees. But, these persons do not appear to me to reflect upon the quantity that must be created in proportion to those already existing; that the notes in circulation must be doubled in the first year; that they must go on increasing in quantity at the same rate, as long as the war continues, for that there will not be there, as in England, taxes coming in to pay any part of them off; in short, that it must be an issue of paper with the notorious want of capital in those who make that issue. Under these circumstances, not forgetting the effect of the recollection of the old paper-money, sacks full of which are, by some persons in the country, kept as a memorial of the good faith of "King Cong," it is naturally to be expected, that, at the first additional issue of paper-money, a depreciation of two or three for one would take place. Nay, I would take an even bett, that, at this moment, many people are hoarding up their dollars; and that, if an accommodation be not made with England, in a very few months, there will be a regular trade of barter for paper against money, at a depreciation of one half. As to "loans," of which some persons talk, who will lend to a government that has no internal revenue? Who will lend to a government, that will be obliged to acknowledge that it has no revenue at all; and, that it is totally unable to pay the interest (except in depreciated paper) of its former loans? France and Holland lent America money, during the revolutionary war. Can they do it now? And, if they could, would they do it, under circumstances such as now exist? During the revolutionary war, though the commerce of America suffered greatly, and though the people suffered greatly from that cause; yet, the suffering was not what it would now be. Then our enemies were powerful at sea. Their fleets were, in Europe and the West Indies, equal to our own, in point of numbers. They had a powerful fleet upon the American station; so powerful, at one time, for ours to venture to face. Under the protection of these fleets, the Americans sent out shoals of "privateers," and carried on a great deal of trade with their merchant ships under the same

protection. Indeed, during that war the American mercantile-marine increased; and the country was, too, greatly assisted by trade carried on under neutral flags. How completely she would now be destitute of all these means of alleviating her sufferings, I need not point out. The contrast will present itself to every mind, except, perhaps, to the minds of those, who negotiated the rejected treaty, and who left the question respecting the search for seamen "open for future discussion." To the minds of men, who could consent to enter upon any negotiation whatever, the non-importation act held, in the way of a rod, over their backs, it would be easy, perhaps, for the American minister to make it appear, that his country is now in a better situation for war than she was at the beginning of her revolutionary contest; but, certainly, not to the mind of any other human being. The late ministers falk much of the honour of the country; but, I think, their opponents may safely defy them to cite any transaction so dishonourable to the country as the entering upon this treaty, while the non-importation act existed. The case stands thus: the Americans make a demand upon us; they demand of us to give up, to stipulate, to sign and seal away, a right of inestimable value to us. No matter, however, what be the nature of the demand, a demand it is, and, because we do not immediately yield, they pass an act for the well-known and openly avowed purpose of compelling us to yield. There is something, too, in the silent language of this act unbearably insolent: "we know you to be a huckstering nation; we know you to be under the sway of your avarice; we pass this act to compel you to grant us that, which, in the end, will ruin your maritime power; and, with this act suspended over your backs, we will negotiate with you." And, to our everlasting shame, they found in England, a set of men perfectly ready to enter upon such a negotiation. Thanks to the king, we have got rid of that set of men, of Lord Holland and his little Scotch squad of flattering scribblers. This conduct on our part, was the cause of Mr. Jefferson's boldness in rejecting the treaty; and, indeed, his boldness was quite natural, after having seen us ready to enter upon a negotiation with the non-importation act in existence, especially when he saw, that our negotiators had left the question of his arrogant demand "open to future discussion." This was the main point; and, there can be little doubt, that his ministers left here, told him to stand firm, and that, in the end, our

reverses upon the continent, joined with our dread of the non-importation act, would induce us to submit. Those ministers must, too, have perceived of what sort of materials Lord Holland and Lord Auckland were composed; they must have perceived that the whole thing was, with them, a matter of mere trade, and not of politics; they must have perceived the set of notions that pervaded the minds of the whole cabinet; and, their opinion, upon this point, being submitted to Mr. Jefferson, he would, of course, make his demands accordingly. So that, again I say, that, if we have war with America, the fault will be that of the late ministers and not of the present. The dispute is, however, now brought to a clearly understood issue. The Americans demand, that we shall give up the right of searching their merchant ships for men; they have passed certain acts to compel us to submit to that demand; and the king has, in the most solemn manner, declared to the people, and to the world, that to that demand he "never" will submit. It remains, then, to be seen; it remains for the world to witness, which of the two will hold to his word, King George, or "King Cong"; which nation, after all the talk, has the least fear of the other, England or America. The officers, who have been selected to go out, are of high reputation for valour, discretion, and experience; and I, for my part, confidently anticipate a glorious result. It would, perhaps, be as well, when the seas are clear of ice, which will be in the month of April, not to wait for an attempt upon Nova Scotia, which might be made from some of the Northern States; but to go and burn the shipping and knock down the town of Falmouth, and inflict the like punishment upon a few other places; that is to say, if the Congress do not, without delay, place things in their former state, or, at least, if they can be proved to have made any preparations for war, it being manifest that such preparations are levelled at us. The effect which a resolute and prompt mode of acting towards America would have in Europe, every man of discernment will easily perceive. It would be one of the great means of enabling us to obtain an honourable, a safe, a lasting peace, in Europe; such a peace as would establish it, as an indisputable fact, that the independence of England was not to be injured by all the nations of the earth combined. Not a peace, like that of Amiens, in which we appeared as acknowledged underlings; in which, notwithstanding all our endeavours to disguise it, we stood trembling for our lives;

and, after which, we ourselves were engaged in speculations as to what would finally become of us. Not such a peace as this; but a peace which shall make every man feel confident of future safety, and that shall deprive all those who would prevent an inquiry into the terrible abuses that exist, of pretences founded upon "the dangers of the country;" a peace that shall put an end to that "crisis of our fate," in which, for so many years, the successive factions have told us that we existed. But, this sort of peace is not to be brought about by "motions for peace." Motions for peace! "Mr. Whitbread's motion for peace!" What can this mean? Why not make a motion for rain, or for fair weather? What sense can there be in such a motion? The motion, it appears to me, should be for an humble petition to the man, who has sworn that he will conquer us. There would be some sense in that, but, in "a motion for peace" I can discover nothing that is rational; nothing that has common sense in it, except, indeed, it be for peace upon the terms stated in the pamphlet of Mr. Roscoe (which pamphlet it shall be my business, as it is my duty, to answer in my next number) who appears to think, that we should be perfectly and permanently safe, to make a peace, leaving all the ports and all the naval means of the continent of Europe at the absolute disposal of Napoleon, and who sees in that military Emperor, no symptoms of a desire to do any thing more, than consolidate his authority and establish his dynasty in France.—III. On Wednesday, the 3rd instant, a debate took place, in the House of Commons, upon the following motion: "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, praying that he will be graciously pleased to give directions that there be laid before the House the substance and dates of all information transmitted by His Majesty's Ministers at the Court of Copenhagen, at any period during the last year, respecting the naval force of Denmark and particularly with respect to any measures adopted to augment the same, or of putting it into a state of forward preparation, or in procuring seamen to man the same in any part thereof." This motion, at the close of a very long speech, was made by Mr. Ponsonby, the new leader of "the gentlemen opposite;" and it was opposed by the ministers, upon the ground, that the papers could not, with propriety, be made public, even if necessary to justify the measure of seizing the Danish fleet, and, that they were not necessary to that justification. At the close

the debate a division took place, when there appeared, for the motion 108, against 253. This debate, in which there was a pretty fair trial of strength between the two parties, was also a trial upon the subject of the Danish expedition; but, with the exception of the information, communicated to the house by Mr. Canning, there was nothing said, which had not, in substance at least, been said before. That information was, indeed, of great importance; for, it not only strips the Danes of that fine character for inoffensiveness, which had been attributed to them by some persons, but showed, most satisfactorily, that it was next to impossible, that they could have felt any thing like shame or sorrow at giving up their fleet upon the conditions proposed by us. The ministers took the ground of necessity, evident from notorious circumstances; and upon this ground, which they should have taken at the first, the plain common sense of the country and of mankind is with them. It was well to make known to the country, facts which were not before generally known; and this has now been done; but, it was, at no time, proper to lay any stress upon "secret" information, because that was sure to excite doubts as to the great plea of necessity. Some of those, who insist, that this is a new system of morality, upon which we are acting, may, probably, be sincere; but, I would ask any one of those gentlemen, whether, if he had, in the course of a year, seen Sweden invaded through the means of Denmark; a hostile fleet lying in the ports of Norway, and another in those of Sweden, he would not have cursed the imbecility of those ministers, who waited patiently, to see Napoleon effect an object, so dear to his heart? Much has been said about the consequence of the future hatred of the Danes towards us. The hatred of a nation, I allow, is not to be wantonly provoked; but, will any one pretend, that it is possible for any future hatred of the Danes to produce acts more hostile to our welfare, than those of which Denmark has been guilty for the last thirty years? In what way is the hatred of that nation to operate upon us? In the way of war to be sure. Well, then, as I have, upon a former occasion, clearly shewn, they have availed themselves of every opportunity of proving to us the existence of this hatred for the period above mentioned, without having recently discovered, in any part of their conduct, the slightest inclination to amend their ways. But, in taking a final leave of this subject (for it is now pretty well exhausted,) I beg leave to repeat, that if

the Danes had been as good a nation as they are a bad nation; if they had been towards us, as harmless in their future probable views and in their past conduct, as they have been mischievous, still, if I had been minister, I would, if they had rejected the proposition made to them, have seized their fleet and arsenals; because, though ever so willing to resist the power of France, it was manifest that they wanted the ability; because, situated as they were with respect to our enemy, it was also manifest, that they would have been made use of as instruments in his hands, for the purpose of insuring our subjugation; and because, having the power of my country committed to my hands, it is my duty so to employ that power as to prevent every thing which manifestly tends to its subjugation, let who will suffer from my exertions. And this is no "new morality." It is morality as old as the hills and the valleys. It is a morality which must be adopted; or, we must confess that there are certain political evils greater than that of seeing one's country conquered.

Westminster, 5th Feb. 1808.

IRELAND, AS IT IS.
VINDEK, LETTER III.

SIR,—If there be any case, in which, more than another, it behoves those, who venture to state an opinion, to satisfy their own minds perfectly of the justice of their impression, it is that, wherein their opinion, if adopted and acted upon, would be decisive of the happiness or misery of millions of their fellow creatures. Yet, so indisposed or incapable is the bulk of mankind, to undertake or exercise this important function of intellectual and independent beings, that there is no imposition too gross, no error too flagrant, not to obtain the countenance and support of the ignorant and unreflecting. The facility of being deluded is the prerogative of the vulgar and unlettered; and whilst there are dupes there will be impostors. Even those who are fully competent to form a judgment, are the automatons of habit, influence, or association, unless where their own immediate interests hang upon the result of their decision. Public measures are of wide operation, and comparatively distant consequences; and, unless their effects be locally felt, or faithfully exposed, the generality of the people seldom bestow a thought upon them. This is more particularly the case, when the interests of remote parts only of the empire are at stake, and the existence of habitual prejudices adds to the facility or popular delusion. Weak men with heated imaginations, and wicked men with factious

objects are equally ready to promote their respective purposes, by stimulating the very worst propensities of the unthinking part of the community. No part of the empire has suffered, in this way, so much as Ireland, because no part has been so uniformly traduced, misrepresented, and condemned, either in the whole or in part, by almost all of those, who have undertaken to give to the British public an idea of its actual situation. We have had bigots of all sects, and partisans of all factions, amongst the labourers in this department; but, from the gross misstatements in parliament, down to the unblushing ignorance and effrontery of the wretched pamphlet by Mr. John Bowles, there has not been any statement made to the public, founded upon a comprehensive conception of the real extent of Irish grievances, and the absolute necessity of adequate redress.—In judging of the actual state of Ireland, it would be absurd to apply any standard, by which the circumstances of any other country are usually estimated. Free without the benefits of the constitution, commercial without the possession of capital, and agricultural in spite of every discouragement, the state of that country defies all parallel or competition. To be justly ascertained, it must be estimated as it is, without reference to any other country; and the investigation, that is to lead to any general result, must be conducted with a view to the interests of the people, and not for local, partial, or party purposes. The great and immediate cause of the distresses of Ireland is the want of capital; the intermediate cause, which produces that want of capital, arises from the frequent disturbances, interrupting the public tranquillity, and endangering the individual security of the inhabitants of that country; and the remote or ultimate cause is to be found in the high rents and the extravagant exactions of proprietors, proctors, and middlemen. This is the climax by which we ascend to the true source and origin of Irish calamities. The statement may be unpalatable to the Irish landlords, but it is not the less founded; and no one of them, in or out of parliament, will venture to contradict it. The fact is so well known to every one, in the slightest degree acquainted with that country, that it would require more brass, than Mr. Bowles has proved himself to possess by writing on a subject, of which he is totally ignorant, to deny it. But, I shall proceed to examine the precise manner, in which these causes respectively act, and here we shall find, that, though by a regular analysis of their operation and series, they follow in the order, in which I have placed

them, yet such is the equality of their action and reaction, that they reciprocally produce each other and are produced. The want of capital acts in a variety of ways to depress the people, and retard the prosperity of Ireland. Most of the multiplied sources of employment and industry, which afford support and wealth to the population of other states, are absolutely shut to the people of Ireland for want of sufficient means to prosecute them with success or effect. Only a single manufacture, and that confined to one province, diversifies the labours of the industrious classes. A country possessing every advantage of soil, of climate, and of favourable situation for every purpose of manufactures and commerce, absolutely languishes in a declining state, because it has not the opportunity of developing its natural resources. The commercial jealousy of the English mercantile and manufacturing interests, at the commencement of last century, blasted the manufacturing prospects of Ireland, as if England could suffer by the prosperity of that country. The present century opened with some prospect of the extinction of that narrow spirit of monopoly, which construed the health of the extremity, as the decay of the trunk. But it is in vain, that new prospects and a more auspicious feeling towards Ireland prevails, the defect of capital cramps its every exertion, and the unfortunate propensity of its gentry to emulate the expenditure of their more affluent neighbours in this country, and their consequent exactions from those, who hold under them, keep the seeds of discontent alive, and close the door against the introduction of British capital. The industry of the people, therefore, is, and must be confined to the operations of husbandry and speculations in land. Labour, like every thing else, which is to be purchased, must be similarly affected by the number and variety of markets, and the nature and extent of the demand for it. When the vent is limited and the sellers numerous out of all proportion, the price must sink, and the competition will be, not who shall gain most, but who shall lose least by the sale. Indispensable necessity obliges the unfortunate man, who brings his labour to market, to dispose of it at whatever it will fetch, because he has scarcely an alternative but irremediable want and starvation. But the measure of his suffering does not end here. The same overflow of the market, that reduces the price of labour, enhances the rent of lands, and extends to the other extreme the sources of popular grievance. Many bidders produce high prices, and avaricious proprietors take advantage of the de-

mand to add to their exactions. To this it may be answered, that the undertaking is voluntary on the part of him, who rents land, and that the proprietor has a right to dispose of his property to the best advantage. But how can that be voluntary, which is the fruit of dire and inevitable necessity? The labourer must come into any terms, or be destitute of the means of subsistence for his family. The landlord unquestionably has a right to dispose of his land on the most advantageous terms, but as unquestionably he is bound in justice to raise the price he pays for labour in the same proportion, that he adds to the amount of rent for his land. Thus between the overcharges of the land proprietors and middlemen, and the under rates of labour, the poor and oppressed peasantry are scarcely able to procure a wretched subsistence, bereft of many of the necessities, and totally destitute of any of the comforts or conveniences of life. It should in this place be observed, that the agricultural labourers are not the sole sufferers from these causes. All the working classes in Ireland, except in the cities and great towns, are cultivators, and consequently severely affected by the extravagant rents demanded for lands. The uncertainty of employment, and the ambition of being independant of the market for sustenance, make them submit to any terms, in order that they might have the means of raising produce for their own consumption. The practice, therefore, is general, when possible, amongst the poorer classes in Ireland, of tilling a certain portion of land for the support of their families. In all the acts of the legislature, for securing the rights of landlords or tenants, and regulating their respective interests and claims, there is no provision whatever to be found, that includes, within its protecting operation, this most numerous and oppressed class of occupants. An abolition or commutation of tythes would not afford relief to them, unless some effectual measures should be taken, to shelter them from the exactions of the land proprietors and middlemen. The tenure, by which they hold, is universally annual, and, if we may judge of the future by the past, there is too much reason to conclude, that, so far as their interests are concerned, the removal of the burthen of tythes would not be attended with any material advantage.—The comparative cheapness of provisions is, in general, an indication of nascent wealth and growing prosperity. In general it is so, but in this particular case it is otherwise. The price of provisions is compounded of the price of the labour, land, and materials, employed in their

production. If the price of those be low, whilst the price of any one or two of these be raised, it must follow, that there is a correspondent reduction in the price of the remaining component part or parts of the price of provisions. Thus, within the last thirty years the rents of lands have been trebled to the farmers, and quadrupled to the peasantry, whilst the price of labour has scarcely advanced one-fourth, and the price of every material necessary to cultivation has been trebled; so that, if the price of provisions has trebled within that period, as it undoubtedly has, it must be obvious, that the farmer is indemnified, for the advance of his rent, by the proportionate advance in the price of his produce, but that the great mass of the people is subjected to treble the burthen as to provisions, and quadruple the oppression as to rents, whilst their means have received only a fractional addition of one fourth, or at most one half, during the last thirty years. This point is susceptible of arithmetical demonstration. If we suppose the price of labour thirty years ago to have been as four, and that the produce of his labour was, at that time, adequate to the maintenance of a peasant's family, we may designate the price of provisions or the rent of lands, at the same period, by the same numerical denominator four. The present price of provisions, of labour, and the rent of lands let to the peasantry will be clearly ascertained, by applying the proportion of their respective augmentation to this common denominator. The result is, that labour, increased one half at most, is now as six, provisions trebled as twelve, and rents quadrupled as sixteen. So that, taking the average of rent and provisions at fourteen, the disproportion, between the labourer's necessary expenditure and his means, is nearly as two and a half to one. Under such circumstances, it would appear impossible for him, to subsist himself and his family by his labour; and the fact would be so, if the possession of a small portion of land, to raise produce for their support, did not enable him to compensate for the low price of his labour, and the extravagant rent of the land, by the intense and incessant exertions, with which he cultivates it, both before and after his daily work. This statement alone will suffice to refute the calumnies, so commonly circulated and believed of the Irish peasantry, that they are idle, indolent, and lazy. When engaged in the business of their landlords, or rather task masters, who are anxious to get as much and pay as little as they can, they unquestionably do not display as much alacrity and effort, as when working for themselves. It is not in

human nature to be reconciled to such an inequality of exaction and consideration. The wretched peasant, therefore, does not feel scrupulous of withholding some portion of his full and competent services, under a firm conviction, that, how low soever he may reduce the amount of his labour, it will still be far more than an equivalent for the remuneration, which he is to receive. It is not the peasant, then, that is lazy, but his employer, that is oppressive; and the reason why the former always is supposed, when the latter ought to be the impression, is, because the characters of both are uniformly taken from the representations of those, who think they have an interest in concealing the real state of the case, because they would otherwise become self-accusers.—The advocates of the abolition of the slave trade constantly argued, that the indolence, imputed to slaves, was a consequence of their unhappy condition. If these very humane gentlemen had given themselves the trouble to examine, but superficially, into the state and circumstances of the Irish peasantry, who are accused of the same inettiness, they would have found room for the exercise of their philanthropy amongst a population, nominally free, but actually subjected to all the miseries of bondage. They would have perceived, that the imputed quality was but a consequence of the reaction of a reasoning principle against outrageous oppression, and they would have been encouraged to engage in the laudable work of redress, by the animating prospect of procuring comfort for so many millions of their fellow freemen and subjects. In truth and in fact, the condition of the slaves in the West Indies, except in the sentimental consciousness of freedom, is paradise, compared with the situation of the unfortunate peasants of Ireland. For though debarred of the actual enjoyment of that first blessing of man in his civil state, liberty, they possess all the substantial comforts, that can be procured from its exercise, in their sphere. Well clad, well fed, well lodged, and amply provided with every necessary care and attendance, they, unhappy as a condition of slavery must be, are yet exempted from those anxieties and afflictions, which the vicissitudes of seasons and the revolutions of property ordinarily bring upon their owners. Whatever may be the circumstances of the planter, his slaves, as a most valuable part of his property, must be properly attended to. The contrast between their situation and that of the peasants of Ireland, may be amply, though summarily, described, in the negative enumeration of negro comforts and accommodations. Badly, or rather scarcely

clad, ill fed, and worse lodged, dependant upon his own means alone for every necessary to restore health or sustain life, and exposed to all the hardships of a state of slavery without any of the advantages of a state of freedom, the Irish peasant drags on a miserable existence, embittered by intolerable practical burthens, and incapable of alleviation by the communication of any political rights.—What has been stated above renders it scarcely necessary to pursue this subject further; yet it will not be amiss to add another illustration of the amount of the sufferings of the mass of the people of Ireland. The population of that country is now ascertained to be about five millions. Protestant bigots will state it to be less, as Catholic bigots will perhaps represent it greater; but, however it may suit the former to extenuate, or the latter to exaggerate the fact, for the purpose of decrying or enhancing the Catholic claims, public documents and political calculation, prove the population of Ireland to exceed five millions of souls. Upon these grounds therefore, I take its population at five millions; and, as in this inquiry we have nothing to do with sects or factions, I shall, according to my former grand distinction, consider that population as composed of two descriptions of persons, the oppressors, and those, that are oppressed. In the former are included all the land proprietors both absentees and residents, and all the various denominations and classes of popular scourges, the middlemen; in the latter the whole mass of the laboring poor; and I have reason to assume the number of the former at one million, and that of the latter at four. Now, however accident, or good fortune, or unusual means from rare success, may enable some out of this vast number occasionally to vary their regular course of diet, the great staple of their support consists of potatoes. The average consumption of potatoes in a family of six persons amounts to twenty stones in six days, or twelve hundred and twenty stones in the year. The average produce of an acre of land in culture for potatoes is eighty-two barrels of twenty stones each. From these averages of produce and consumption we shall find the consumption of the whole four millions of people to be forty millions and six hundred thousand barrels, and the quantity of land necessary to raise that produce to be about five hundred thousand acres. It will, no doubt, be objected, that some portion of this description of persons consume other kinds of food, and consequently less of that, which is assumed, as the great staple of their support. But, though that fact be admitted, it

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can have no material effect upon the result just stated, nor upon that which is to follow. The average rent, paid, for potatoe land, by the labouring poor, is much under-stated at six guineas per acre per annum, and the average rent of their cabins far exceeds two guineas per annum, whilst the average charge for tythes is at least fifteen shillings per acre. The result of these averages, which, I challenge any man of Ireland to question, is that four millions of the Irish nation raise a subsistence, such as it is, and God knows how miserable their fare is, for themselves from five hundred thousand acres of land, for which, and tythes, and the wretched hovels, they in general have to dwell in, they pay by their labour alone to their oppressors of all denominations, the enormous sum of five million two hundred and ninety thousand pounds, Irish currency, annually!!! Let the land proprietors and middlemen, who, in prosecuting their selfish objects, represent themselves as the people of Ireland, reflect upon this statement and invalidate any item of it they can; let them state, if they dare, or shew, if they are able, that the clergy, who are by law entitled to one tenth of the produce of the land, in demanding little more than one tenth of the rent, exacted for that land, are to be considered as the oppressors of the people; let them ask themselves this tremendous question, whether a population so oppressed can be wedded to their privations, or dread a change; and if, after this process, they shall persevere in bringing a case before parliament, let them take care to present themselves in a character free of suspicion, and with such a representation of the real grievances of their country, as may lead to a radical and complete investigation of its actual situation, and terminate in such measures, as the wisdom of parliament may recommend for the comfort, tranquillity, and happiness of the whole nation—I am, Sir, &c.—VINDEK.—London, Jan. 26, 1808.

“*PERISH COMMERCE.*”

SIR,—If the subject of commerce be not grown too stale for your Register, (it is a subject, I hope, that will be long interesting to Britons) I beg leave to send you a few observations, upon the new doctrine, promulgated by you and Mr. Spence, ‘that Britain is independent of commerce.’ Amidst your numerous correspondents, I have not seen any who have attacked your principle, although it seems to me to be not very defensible. I come, therefore, if not in due season, in due order, to storm the citadel, after the outworks have been damaged.—Mr.

Spence and you are of opinion, that Britain is independent of commerce, because commerce creates no wealth, or at least none worth noticing; but, Mr. Spence makes a distinction (a very proper one in my opinion) between the wealth, and the prosperity of a nation; and says, that, though a nation may be wealthy without being prosperous, it cannot be prosperous, without, at the same time, growing wealthy: it is, therefore, incumbent upon you and Mr. Spence to shew, not only, that commerce creates no wealth directly, but also that it does not promote the prosperity of the nation, before you can decide that the nation is independent of it. Mr. Spence affirms that *manufactures* create no wealth; but at the same time, he attributes to manufactures the flourishing state of agriculture, whence all wealth, according to him, is derived; for what reason, therefore, he should not have attributed to commerce a stimulus of a similar kind, I am at a loss to guess; since I think, it may be clearly proved, that, both commerce and manufactures act upon agriculture, in the same way, and that commerce affords, at least as much encouragement to agriculture, as manufactures do, because it not only promotes agriculture directly, but also encourages manufactures, which, by Mr. Spence’s acknowledgment, extend agriculture. Thinking, therefore, as I think, that commerce encourages agriculture in both the above ways, directly and indirectly, I cannot say that I am one of those enlightened persons, who feel no joy at a new market being opened to our manufactures; or that I can see any large branch of our commerce cut off, or in consequence of it, a considerable manufacture destroyed, and the manufacturers turned out of employment, without some degree of pain. It seems to me, Sir, that if a new market be opened for our goods, an additional spring is given to our manufactures, or our agriculture; and that, on the contrary, by cutting off any part of our export trade, a check is given to both. But, Mr. Spence makes another distinction, which is between goods of more or less value, and says that commerce obtains for us luxuries in exchange for more valuable commodities. Mr. Spence, himself, Sir, lays it down as an axiom, that the prosperity of a nation consists in expenditure, not in parsimony; and it is evident, that if consumable articles, wine, tea, tobacco, or even Mr. Spence’s new luxury, nitrous oxyd, be imported in exchange for our linen, and our hardware, the export of our manufactured goods may go on increasing, year by year, for ever—and I should think it was equally evident, if we

hoarded up our woollens and our hardware, or exchanged them for Italian marble, or for American bars of gold, that in a short time we should have none of our own goods, or more marble or gold bars, than we should know what to do with, or that they would be of no value, because nobody would buy them. Mr. Spence says, that the land proprietors ought to spend their rents for the good of the nation, that *luxuries* offer, and ought to offer inducements to them to spend these rents; but, that he means *home made luxuries*: now, is it not the same thing, Sir, with respect to encouragement to the manufacturer, whether the rents of the nation be spent in tobacco, and paid from America to our manufacturers for their goods, or whether the money be paid by the landholders for goods immediately to the manufacturers? But, here Mr. Spence and you turn upon me and say, then the commerce is useless, cut it off, or let the landholders buy the goods of the manufacturers: and, I agree, that this would answer exactly every purpose, if the landholders could be induced to purchase the manufactures; but, unluckily they are already supplied with as much woollen and hardware as they want: let the manufacturers then, say you, be employed about something that the landholders do want. Now, it lies upon you and Mr. Spence to show what these articles are which the consumers will want, and which the manufacturers can supply: for my own part, I believe, it will be found, that no such articles can be supplied at home to the same extent that commerce can supply them; and, if so, it being necessary, that the land proprietors should spend their rents, that luxuries should offer inducements to them to do so; that the more luxuries are offered, the greater the inducement; that home manufacturers cannot offer so many or great inducements, as manufactures and foreign commerce together can offer, it follows that foreign commerce is necessary to the prosperity of the country; the conclusion is inevitable; and it must not be forgotten that, as Mr. Spence states, ‘for the constantly progressive maintenance of the prosperity of the community, it is absolutely requisite that the class of land proprietors should go on progressively increasing their expenditure.’ It lies therefore, upon you and Mr. Spence to show, how the fortunes of £10,000 and of £20,000 a year in this country, can be spent in home manufactures. —At page 58, Mr. Spence supposes an objection to be started, ‘that although commerce does not increase the wealth of the nation directly, it may do it indirectly;

‘but the direct creation of wealth by commerce is the opinion here controverted,’ says Mr. Spence. But, here, Sir, I should think, that Mr. Spence must have forgotten the title of his book, because Britain is no more independent of commerce, if commerce increase her wealth indirectly, than if it did so directly; and, in order to prove that Britain is independent of commerce, it must be shewn that commerce does neither the one nor the other; or, at least, that Britain can do equally well without it; which, I apprehend has not yet been proved. Mr. Spence says, that it is in consequence of the consumption of so great an amount of foreign commodities in this country, that there is so great a consumption of our manufactures by foreign nations; and, who ever doubted this fact? But if this consumption of our manufactures by foreign nations, in consequence of our consumption of foreign commodities, adds as much to the wealth of the nation by stimulating agriculture, as if that wealth had been created by commerce, where lies the difference, and what does it signify, whence the wealth is derived? If (according to Mr. S.) the land of the country produce £120 millions a year, and a sixth part of the population be employed in producing it, that sixth part of the population will consume 20 millions, and there will remain one hundred millions, one half of which is exported in some shape or other, and the remaining half is expended by the manufacturers for home consumption: on this state of the case, I cannot perceive why the nation is not indebted for its prosperity, as much to the 50 millions exported by commerce, as to the 50 millions consumed by our home manufacturers; and, it appears to me, that the nation is more prosperous, not by 4 or 10 millions at most, as Mr. S. states it, which may be gained by trade (and which, I believe, is not gained at all) but by the whole 50 millions exported in our produce, or manufactures.—But, say you, the nation can do without commerce, because commerce is only an exchange: here the money is, and it may be applied directly to the maintenance of the manufacturers, if the land proprietors chuse it. The manner in which this money is to be so applied is the case in point. Supposing any great check to the export of our manufactures, you do not suppose, that the land proprietors (or rather the home consumers whoever they be) will immediately buy the produce of the manufacture. No; for I remember in one number of your Register, that you suppose the manufacturers to be thrown out of employment, and propose that, they shall be

employed in agriculture: but, here Mr. Spence stops you, by saying, that ‘the produce of the land must be always in proportion to the consumers, and that not one acre more can be cultivated, until the number of manufacturers shall increase.’ Mr. Spence, in obviating this difficulty says, that ‘we have the remedy against any great check to our manufactures in our own hands, and that it is only for us to spend the money, which we before *vested* in tobacco, in a new coat or two a piece, to the encouragement of our own home manufactures, and all is well again.’ Mr. Spence, Sir, is I dare say a very sensible man, and of your understanding, Mr. Cobbett, no one, I believe doubts; it is lamentable then to see how far sensible men may be driven aside by a favourite system. It is an obvious question to ask Mr. Spence, and it is wonderful he should not have asked himself the question, who is to oblige, or what motive is to induce the consumers of this country to purchase a coat or two a year, or any other sort of our manufactures more than they want. Mr. Spence says, man is naturally selfish, and we well know, that selfish persons are to be acted upon only by selfish considerations. Mr. S. must know, that it is not his profusely saying, ‘if we are such slaves to our appetite, we prove ourselves unworthy of existence as a nation,’ that will make men in general spend their money in two coats, when one is sufficient, instead of in those luxuries, to which, they have been accustomed most: as if Mr. S. was conscious that this plan would not succeed, he adds in the next page, that government should interfere, and employ the idle manufacturer in making roads and new canals; upon which then, you observe, ‘that they might just as well be employed in throwing stones at the moon;’ in which sentiment I fully agree with you. But, besides that their work would be useless, alas! Mr. Cobbett, I believe, you and I shall think them hard times, whenever our manufacturers shall apply for assistance to government. But, Mr. Spence, perhaps, putting this consideration out of the question, (for I am not acquainted with his political sentiments) may say, ‘still here the money is; it is not sent abroad for wine or for tobacco, and if our manufacturers cannot be employed by it, at least they may be maintained; and the money may be raised, as all money for government is raised, by taxes.’ Upon the supposition then, and this is the fair supposition, that Buonaparté succeeds in annihilating our commerce, all our manufacturers employed on goods for foreign consumption;

all our seamen employed in their export, and in importing what we purchase with them, must be maintained by government, or by their parishes. Now, Sir, I ask Mr. Spence and you, or any other men of understanding, whether in their opinion, in such a state of things, manufactures and agriculture would flourish; or, whether, on the contrary, manufactures would not diminish, agriculture would not decline, rents would not fail, and such a scene of distress and misery ensue in this country, as the stoutest heart in it would fear to look upon? Desiring you, or Mr. Spence’s answer to this question, I take my leave of you for the present, and subscribe myself, your obedient servant,—F.—Jan. 22, 1808.

“*PERISH COMMERCE.*”

SIR,—When I first perused the extracts from Mr. Spence’s “*Britain Independent of Commerce*,” which were inserted in your Register, and the remarks made by you thereon, I entertained the same opinion as yourselves that national wealth is neither created by manufactures, nor is derived from foreign commerce; but, having read the work itself, and having given the subject more mature reflection, my opinion is very much altered; and though I now think that agriculture is by far the most productive of the three branches, yet I do not agree with you that there is not *any* national wealth created by manufactures, nor that there is not *any* addition to the national wealth derived from foreign commerce. The doctrine you contend for, appears to me to be supported by erroneous positions, fallacious reasoning, and unwarrantable deductions, which as far as they relate to the position that no wealth is derived from manufactures, it is my intention by the present communication to attempt to controvert. It is stated that the rent which the tenant pays to his landlord out of the proceeds arising from the cultivation of his estate, and the surplus profits which remain to himself are wealth added to the national stock; but that no such wealth is produced by the profit of the master manufacturer, nor by the wages of the common manufacturer, (which it is truly stated do not amount to more than is sufficient for his bare subsistence.) The reasoning in support of this position, that no national wealth is produced by the profit of the master manufacturer is this. “The master manufacturer may acquire riches, but the whole of his gains would be at the expence of the land proprietors, and no addition would be made to the national wealth.” And the following case

adduced as a demonstration. “If a coach-maker were to employ so many men for half a year in the building of a coach, as that for their subsistence during that time he had 50 quarters of corn, and if we suppose that he sold this coach to a land proprietor for 60 quarters of corn, it is evident that the coachmaker would be ten quarters of corn richer than if he had sold it for 50 quarters, its original cost. But it is equally clear that the land proprietor would be 10 quarters of corn poorer than if he had bought his coach at the prime cost.” This being the case, the following remark is added. “A transfer then, not a creation of wealth has taken place, whatever one gains the other loses, and the national wealth is just the same.” Mr. Spence, in the passage which I have just quoted, supposes that the master manufacturer derives his profit at the expence of the land proprietor, and that what the former gains the latter loses; but, this I entirely dissent from, and do contend that the latter has sustained no loss in parting with his corn, for he has got an *equivalent* in the coach in exchange for it. I say, Sir, an equivalent, for if the coach can be sold for 60 quarters of wheat, I maintain that it is worth that quantity. An article is worth just as much as it will sell for and no more. What other criterion is there to judge by? Can you, Mr. Cobbett, or can Mr. Spence point out any other? The labour of the workman, and the cost of the materials then amount to 50 quarters of wheat, and the coach is sold for 60 quarters of wheat, then there must obviously be a clear gain of 10 quarters. It was stated by Mr. Spence, that the surplus profit arising from the cultivation of land, is clear gain after the expences attending the cultivation and the maintenance of the cultivator are deducted. Then why is not the surplus produce of the coach equally clear gain. There does not appear to me to be the least difference between the two cases. In the one the value of the corn, horses, cows, sheep, and other articles on the land depends on the price they will sell for. In the other, the value of the coach depends on a similar contingency. I do, therefore, think it is quite clear that the profit which the master manufacturer derives from the manufacture of the coach is clear gain to the nation. And, I think it will presently appear that the wages of the common workman are equally so. Your correspondent Wroc, and my old antagonist (The Game Cock as he modestly called himself in his communication on the dominion of the sea, but who has proved to

be a downright dunghill on this subject, as he termed me in that) has observed that the master and journeymen manufacturers if they had not been employed in building the coach, must notwithstanding have eaten, and would in point of fact, have consumed the same quantity of food. In answer to this, your correspondent says, to have eaten without producing something in return, would have been attended with a *diminution* of the wealth of the country. Now, I think it is clear that to eat upon any event, whether upon the event of producing something in return, or upon any other, will be productive of a diminution of wealth. And, I think it is equally clear, that if the manufacturer must have eaten at all events, and have thereby occasioned a diminution of national wealth, the coach which he produces must be an addition to that wealth. It is to him as manufacturer the public is indebted for the coach, but it is not to him as manufacturer that the public loses the food which he consumes, for he would eat that food whether he were a manufacturer or not. If the diminution of food were owing to the manufacture of the coach, it might be then with reason contended that no accession of wealth was produced by means of the manufacture, not more so than if by entering a shop and taking away 21s. in silver, and leaving 1 guinea in gold in exchange, I should add to the wealth of the shopkeeper. But as the diminution of the food is entirely distinct and independent of the manufacture of the coach, this manufacture must obviously be a source of wealth, as much so as if I take the 21s. from the shopkeeper in taxes, and pay him one guinea as a remuneration for vending in his shop certain articles of my property, this one guinea would be an accession to his wealth. To ascend to a much higher subject, but which I cannot forbear noticing on account of its striking analogy. The ocean loses its waters by evaporation, and is supplied by rivers, now as this evaporation is wholly unconnected with, and not occasioned by the rivers, those rivers are undoubtedly the source of the sea; and so as the consumption of the manufacturers food is not occasioned by the manufacture of the coach, the manufacture of the coach is indisputably a source of wealth to the nation. Those are the observations which have presented themselves to my mind, in opposition to your doctrine that manufactures are not a source of wealth to the nation. I shall at present confine myself to this subject, and will on some future occasion enter into the consideration of, and attempt to answer the exceedingly ob-

jectionable other particularly the commerce import.—

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jectionable matter which I find in many other parts of Mr. Spence's pamphlet, particularly that which relates to our foreign commerce in both its branches of export and import.—G.—*Jan. 23, 1808.*

“PERISH COMMERCE.”

SIR,—You observe in your strictures on commerce, that foreign commerce does not produce wealth, and that the manufacturers of Birmingham and Manchester might be better employed in cultivating the land. I am not a merchant, nor am I connected with manufacturers; but I have travelled through some of the mining and manufacturing parts of England, and the following observations have occurred to me. If I am wrong I shall be happy to be corrected by your better judgment.—I believe I am pretty near the truth when I state that as much iron ore, at the mine, as would make a pound of iron, would hardly cost a half-penny, and the coals and lime-stone to flux it perhaps a half-penny more, or thereabouts. The materials therefore to make six pounds of iron we will say cost about six-pence, at the mine. After it has been fluxed, and gone through the process necessary to render it malleable, it is sent to Birmingham; then it is made into steel, and of this steel the ingenious manufacturers of that place make articles of the value of £500 and upwards; I know dress swords have been made there of that value. But for the illustration of my argument, we will take the more moderate sum of £50. This sword, or whatever other article of the value of £50, is exported and sold for that amount in a country producing cotton. With this sum we will assume that 1000lbs. of cotton may be purchased. This cotton is imported into England and carried to Manchester, where, we will say, each pound is manufactured into articles of the value of 10s.; and it will be admitted that it may be fabricated into goods of much greater value. The 1000lbs. of cotton will therefore, when re-exported in a manufactured state, produce £500. With this £500. 10,000lbs. of cotton may be purchased and again imported into England. Now we have 10,000 lbs. of cotton, which may be manufactured into a thousand different things for the convenience and comfort of the rich as well as the poor of this country. Is not this real wealth? And more truly so than either gold or silver? And what is it that has produced this wealth? why the labour and ingenuity of our countrymen employed upon sixpence worth of iron ore and coals. What is it that has produced this ingenuity? Is it not commerce, and were commerce to perish

would not this ingenuity perish along with it, and would not the towns of Birmingham, and Manchester, where this ingenuity is exerted to the greatest extent, be deserted and perish also? And how could you employ their inhabitants in any other way so productively as this? We now acquire the productions of the very best lands and the fruits of the labour of other countries by their industry at the forge and loom instead of the scanty crops which their labour would furnish if employed upon the sterile waste lands of England.—In your lucubrations on this subject I perceive that money, as a circulating medium, is excluded, and food substituted, in order, as it is said, to simplify the question. But is this fair? Is not the labour of the Englishmen employed on the iron of England as much the production of our country as the corn raised by the cultivation of the soil? And is not clothing a necessary of life as well as food? Or take it in your way, and call food the only national wealth. Will not hard-ware, will not manufactured cotton, instead of wine and tobacco which no doubt are superfluities, purchase grain in foreign countries? I confess I cannot answer these questions in such a manner as to enable me to accede entirely to the opinion which you have supported with your usual ability; and I therefore propose them not as a disputant, but from a real wish to have my doubts resolved.—I am aware that my story of the sixpenny worth of iron ore and coals, may bear some resemblance to that of the girl and her basket of eggs; but my iron ore is not as perishable an article; and, as I insure my goods, I go upon better grounds than that unlucky personage.—H.—*24th Jan. 1808.*

OFFICIAL PAPERS.

WESTPHALIA.—*King Jerome's Proclamation, dated Cassel, 17th Dec. 1807.*

We Jerome Napoleon, by the grace of God and the Constitution, King of Westphalia, French Prince, &c. &c. to our good and faithful subjects, and inhabitants of our kingdom of Westphalia, greeting:—Westphalians, Divine Providence has pointed this æra in order to re-unite your scattered provinces under one august institution, together with neighbouring families though strangers to each other.—I come to occupy this throne, prepared by victory, raised by the assent of the greatest powers of Europe, founded on a title no less sacred, by your real interest.—Too long has your country suffered from the pretensions of families and the intrigues of cabinets; you were exposed to all the

calamities of wars, and your were excluded from all the benefits of peace. Some of your towns only reaped the barren honour of annexing their names to treaties, in which nothing was overlooked but the well-being of the people who inhabited them.—How widely different are the results of the wars stirred up against the august head of my house! It is for nations that Napoleon has conquered; and each of the treaties he has concluded, is a step farther towards the end proposed by his mighty genius, of giving to entire nations a political existence, government and laws dictated by wisdom, the establishment to each of them of a country, and the direction hereafter of none in that deplorable nullity, in which they were equally unable either to steer clear of war, and avail themselves of peace.—Westphalians!—Such was the issue of the battles of Marengo, of Austerlitz, of Jena; such now is for you the result of the memorable treaty of Tilsit. On that day you obtained the first of blessings, a country. Far be now removed from your recollection those scattered dominations, the last result of the feudal system, which prepared a master for each city; these different interests are now to form but one; your master now is the law; your protector, the monarch, who is to cause it to be respected: henceforth you shall have no other.—Westphalians, you have got a constitution adapted to your manners and to your interests: it is the fruit of the meditations of a great man, and of the experience of a great nation: its principles are in unison with the present state of the civilization of Europe, and are big with prospects of improvement, which will far overbalance the sacrifices which this new order of things may impose upon some of you. You must, therefore, attach yourselves to it with confidence, since upon it rests your liberty and your prosperity.—In ascending the throne, I contracted the obligation of making you happy, and I will be faithful to it. The equality of the modes of religion shall be maintained, property assured and guaranteed. Thus shall there be established between me and my people an alliance of wishes and of interests, that shall never change. Westphalians, your sovereign henceforward relies on your fidelity and inviolable attachment.

BRAZIL TRADE.—*Circular Letter from the Portuguese Ambassador to the Governor of the Island of St. Catherine, and Condi-*

tions of exporting goods to St. Catherine, until the pleasure of the Prince Regent be known.—London, bearing date the 6th of January, 1808.

Agreeably to the letter which I had the honour of addressing you, under date of the 4th January of the present year, and in which I explained at large to your excellency the motives which induced me to sanction the sending out of British merchantmen to the island of St. Catherine, provided that their cargoes consist of articles hitherto received into the custom house of Portugal, I have now to request that you will be pleased to order that the ship——should be admitted into the custom house of that island, the captain or master of which, (who is the bearer of this letter), you will permit to unload and sell his cargo, and give directions that no more duties shall be required of her, than were paid in Portugal for the same articles; and also that those duties should not be demanded until he has sold and dispatched his cargo, in every particular conforming to the practice of the custom house at Lisbon.—And as it may possibly happen that your excellency may not yet find yourself authorised to consent to the sale of such cargoes, I earnestly request you that at all events you will be pleased to allow that they should be landed and properly warehoused, and that you will order that the ships should moor in that port, waiting there with their crews, without molestation, until your excellency shall receive the instructions and orders of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent on this head.—Your excellency will observe, that the bearer of this letter ought also to present you with the manifest of the cargo, confirmed by me, and the licence of the British privy council; to fulfil the conditions of which, your excellency will be pleased to order the officers of the customs to deliver to the bearer a certificate of the regular discharge of the articles specified in such manifest.

Conditions.—1st. That all merchants wishing to make adventures to the Brazils without waiting for the regulations of his royal highness, should be obliged to take a licence from the privy council, which will point out the port that will be agreed on by his excellency Mr. Canning and me, and to which alone they must give bond to go.—2dly. That every master, and every shipper, will give the usual bonds at this custom house for the due delivery at the custom house of the said port.

(To be continued.)